

REMARKS/ARGUMENTS

On page 2 of the Office Action, claims 181 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 212, 214 – 234, 236 – 264, and 269 – 272 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by Mihara, et al. (U.S. Patent No. 6,380,132, the “Mihara patent”). Applicant notes that claim 255 was previously canceled.

Applicant respectfully traverses the rejection of claims 181 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 212, 214 – 234, 236 – 254, 256 – 264, and 269 – 272 for the reasons set forth below.

The Invention

Before addressing the specific claim limitations, it will be helpful first to briefly summarize the invention of the pending claims.

The present invention resides in a sheet structure that has a first layer, a second layer, and first, second, third and fourth continuous cut lines. The second layer is attached to a planar surface of the first layer, and together with the first layer, forms at least substantially a multi-layered sheet. The first, second, third and fourth continuous cut lines cut completely through the first layer but not entirely through the multi-layered sheet. The first and second cut lines are parallel to one another. The third and fourth cut lines are parallel to one another and are perpendicular to the first and second cut lines. The third and fourth cut lines intersect the first and second cut lines. The multi-layered sheet and the first cut line are constructed and adapted to cause the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the first cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the first cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the second cut line are constructed and adapted to cause the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the second cut line, and ii) through the entire

sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the second cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the third cut line are constructed and adapted to cause the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the third cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the third cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the fourth cut line are constructed and adapted to cause the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the fourth cut line, ii) through the entire sheet structure, and iii) into separate sheet portions that are configured to be separated apart from one another when the sheet structure, or a portion of the sheet structure, is bent on the fourth cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The sheet structure has a lower bottom-most surface and respective portions of the lower bottom-most surface of the sheet structure form the lower bottom-most surfaces of the separate sheet portions. The sheet structure has a top upper-most surface and respective portions of the top upper-most surface of the sheet structure form the top upper-most surfaces of the separate sheet portions.

The present invention also resides in a sheet structure that has a first layer, a second layer, and a plurality of continuous cut lines. The second layer is attached to a planar surface of the first layer, and together with the first layer at least substantially forms a multi-layered sheet with perimeter edges. The plurality of continuous cut lines cut completely through the first layer, but not entirely through the thickness of the multi-layered sheet. The plurality of cut lines includes a plurality of horizontal cut lines and a plurality of vertical cut lines in a grid. The plurality of cut lines defines a plurality of sheet portions in the multi-layered sheet. At least one of the first and second layers are selected and constructed, and the cut lines configured, so that the sheet structure can be bent upwardly only once, or downwardly only once, along at least some of the plurality of cut lines to thereby split the sheet structure i) along at least some of the plurality of cut lines and ii) through the entire sheet structure, and to separate the sheet portions of the sheet structure into individual sheet portions. The individual sheet portions are

configured to be separated apart from one another. Each edge of the individual sheet portions is formed by one of the split cut lines or one of the perimeter edges. Each of the individual sheet portions includes a portion of the first layer and a portion of the second layer secured to the portion of the first layer.

The present invention also resides in a sheet structure that has a first layer, a second layer, and first, second, third and fourth continuous cut lines. The second layer is attached to a planar surface of the first layer, and together with the first layer, at least substantially forms a multi-layered sheet. The first, second, third and fourth continuous cut lines cut completely through the first layer but not entirely through the multi-layered sheet. The first and second cut lines are parallel to one another. The third and fourth cut lines are parallel to one another and perpendicular to the first and second cut lines. The third and fourth cut lines intersect the first and second cut lines. The multi-layered sheet and the first cut line are structurally capable of causing the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the first cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the first cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the second cut line are structurally capable of causing the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the second cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the second cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the third cut line are structurally capable of causing the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the third cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the third cut line upwardly only once or downwardly only once. The multi-layered sheet and the fourth cut line are structurally capable of causing the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, to split i) on at least a portion of the fourth cut line, ii) through the entire sheet structure, and iii) into separate sheet portions that are configured to be separated apart from one another when the sheet structure, or a portion thereof, is bent on the fourth cut line upwardly only once or

downwardly only once. The separate sheet portions include a portion of the first layer and a portion of the second layer secured to the portion of the first layer.

The present invention also resides in a sheet structure that has a first layer, a second layer, and a plurality of continuous cut lines. The second layer is attached to a planar surface of the first layer, and together with the first layer at least substantially forms a multi-layered sheet with perimeter edges. The plurality of continuous cut lines cut completely through the first layer, but not entirely through the thickness of the multi-layered sheet. The plurality of cut lines includes a plurality of horizontal cut lines and a plurality of vertical cut lines in a grid. The plurality of cut lines defines a plurality of sheet portions in the multi-layered sheet. At least one of the first and second layers and the cut lines are structurally capable of causing the sheet structure, when bent upwardly only once, or downwardly only once, along at least some of the plurality of cut lines, to thereby split the sheet structure i) along the at least some of the plurality of cut lines and ii) through the entire sheet structure, and to separate the sheet portions of the sheet structure into a plurality of individual sheet portions. The plurality of individual sheet portions is configured to be separated apart from one another. Each edge of each of the individual sheet portions is formed by one of the split cut lines or one of the perimeter edges. Each of the individual sheet portions includes a portion of the first layer and a portion of the second layer secured to the portion of the first layer.

Rejection of claims 181 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 212, 214 – 234, 236 – 264, and 269 – 272 Based Upon the Mihara Patent

On pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, independent claims 181, 200, 223, and 242, and dependent claims 182 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 199, 201 – 212, 214 – 222, 224 – 234, 236 – 241, 243 – 254, 256 – 264, and 269 – 272, are rejected under 35 U.S.C. § 102(e) as allegedly being anticipated by the Mihara patent. Applicant respectfully traverses this rejection of claims 181 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 212, 214 – 234, 236 – 254, 256 – 264, and 269 – 272.

On page 2 of the Office Action, the Examiner states “in the absence of what is the intended scope of the term ‘split’, the examiner maintains that the prior art reference Mihara anticipates all the limitations as claimed . . .” In addition, on pages 2 and 3 of the Advisory Action dated December 29, 2008 (the “Advisory Action”), in response to Applicant’s argument that “Applicant’s sheet has structural properties to split from the bottom end of the cut to the bottom surface of the sheet . . .,” the Examiner states “the . . . description is absent from the claimed limitations.” Further, on pages 2 and 3 of the Office Action, the Examiner states “Mihara anticipates all the limitations as claimed, because inherently at least bending Mihara’s multilayered sheet upwardly on the half cut line 2 necessarily renders layers 6 – 8 (a portion thereof) ‘split’ apart at the half cut, even if layer 5 is not break or split.”

However, the Mihara patent *fails* to disclose “to split i) on . . . the first cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure . . . to split i) on . . . the second cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure . . . to split i) on . . . the third cut line, and ii) through the entire sheet structure . . . to split i) on . . . the fourth cut line, ii) through the entire sheet structure, and iii) into separate sheet portions that are configured to be separated apart from one another . . .,” as required by amended independent claims 181 and 223. Also, the Mihara patent *fails* to disclose “to thereby be split i) along . . . cut lines, and ii) through the entire sheet structure . . . to separate the sheet portions . . . into . . . individual sheet portions that are configured to be separated apart from one another . . .,” as required by amended independent claims 200 and 242.

Accordingly, the Mihara patent *fails* to disclose all the limitations of amended independent claims 181, 200, 223, and 242, and the following respective dependent claims: dependent claims 182 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 199, and 272; dependent claims 201 – 212, 214 – 222, and 269; dependent claims 224 – 234, 236 – 241, and 270; and dependent claims 243 – 254, 256 – 264, and 271. Thus, Applicant submits that the § 102(e) rejection of claims 181 – 186, 188 – 194, 197 – 212, 214 – 234, 236 – 254, 256 – 264, and 269 – 272 is improper and should be withdrawn.

Conclusion

Applicant believes the amendments and arguments set forth above place this application in condition for allowance. An early notice of allowance is respectfully requested. If for any reason the Examiner finds the application not in condition for a notice of allowance, the Examiner is requested to call the undersigned practitioner at the telephone number listed below to discuss steps to place the application into condition for allowance. Fees due in connection with this response are paid by credit card. However, in the event of a payment deficiency, or if additional fees are due, please charge the fees to Avery Dennison's Deposit Account No. 013025.

Respectfully submitted,
AVERY DENNISON CORPORATION

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By: /Ronald Ugolick – Reg. No. 57,080/
Ronald Ugolick – Reg. No. 57,080

Customer No. 63543
Avery Dennison Corporation
Law Department
150 North Orange Grove Boulevard
Pasadena, California 91103
Phone (714) 674-8128; Fax (626) 304-2251